

BRUSHES, BLOOD, AND FANGS:
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON VAMPIRE MAKEUP

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Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Chapter 1 - Introduction	01
Chapter 2 - Review of Relevant Literature	04
Chapter 3 - Methods	16
Chapter 4 - Data	21
Chapter 5 - Analysis	59
Chapter 6 - Conclusion	63
References Cited	65
Appendices:	
Appendix A: Films and Series Watched and/or Revisited	69
Appendix B: Interview Questions	70

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Table 1	17
Figure 1	22
Figure 2	22
Figure 3	22
Figure 4	24
Figure 5	24
Figure 6	25
Figure 7	25
Figure 8	26
Figure 9	26
Figure 10	27
Figure 11	29
Figure 12	33
Figure 13	35
Figure 14	35
Figure 15	36
Figure 16	36
Figure 17	39
Figure 18	42
Figure 19	43
Figure 20	46
Figure 21	46
Figure 22	47
Figure 23	50
Figure 24	51
Figure 25	51
Figure 26	51
Figure 27	52
Figure 28	52
Figure 29	54
Figure 30	54
Figure 31	55
Figure 32	55
Figure 33	57

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Abstract

Many film and television productions rely on the use of special effects makeup to portray a character, creature, or injury. Often these makeups reflect a strong relationship to culture and society, as many ideas are derived from mythology, what people fear, or a society's fascination with a subject. How individual artists see and experience the world around them and interact with other artists within the community is also likely to contribute to the overall design of these makeups. However, these ideas must then be translated into something to evoke emotion into a modern audience. In order to gain insight into these factors, vampire makeups will be analyzed to understand how these beings are created from a sketch on paper to the final on-screen product. Interviews with a sample of amateur and professional makeup artists, as well as participant observation studies in formal and informal workshops and classes will provide details regarding the origin of these creature designs in the literature and the imagination. I hypothesize that the data will show a strong link between the artists' own experiences and ideas about a creature, while the specific cultural origins may be largely unconsciously derived through these experiences as well as modern conceptions and stories regarding the idea. The social structures present in the entertainment industry also are critical to these designs, and will be analyzed in this study.

Key Words: folklore, vampires, horror, special effects makeup, innovation, tradition, ethnography, media studies.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Imagine, if you will, a first encounter with the macabre and the unknown.

Entering the convention hall, you are flanked by a horde of the undead (in the form of zombies and vampires), demonic clowns, and monstrous figures. The smell of latex overwhelms you. Smoke from fog machines disorients you as loud screams and blasts of blanks shot from mortars permeate the space. On all sides, you are confronted by images of gore, fantastical creatures, makeup demonstrations, and grotesque displays that may or may not come to life before your eyes. Such was the scene of my initial experience at Midwest Haunter's Convention--a horror and haunted attraction trade show.

When I began this project, I admittedly had little interest in horror movies aside from the classic Universal monster films from the 1930s-50s. Splatter and gore never seemed to appeal to me, and I didn't understand the fascination with those films. However, as my interest in special effects makeup increased, I realized that there was more to the industry than fantasy makeups and whimsical character designs.

Even after diving into the project headfirst and watching every vampire, classic horror, hammer, and splatter film I could find or that was recommended, it took quite some time for me to begin to understand the draw. From an effects and design standpoint, I found most of them fascinating, although I could never feel a sense of uneasiness or dread in the overall theme or storyline. Then I found a few films that preyed on that sense of uneasiness. HP Lovecraft's *The Re-animator* (1985), and Robert Kurtzman's *Children of the Night* (1991) and *The Rage* (2008) were all extremely fascinating films, but each one gave me the proverbial creeps, more so than any of the other films I had seen.

The images from these films are the backdrop for the overall themes of my research, which examine the origins in the forms and designs of vampire makeup effects for film and television. How do you make a monster? More specifically, how do you make a vampire? What are some of the key elements and forms associated with these creatures? What roles do mythology and folklore play in the final product? What do audiences find to be scary? Since the 1980s, film franchises such as *The Lost Boys* (1987) have fascinated audiences worldwide with stories of these fanged creatures. While much has been written on the mythology and folklore of vampires (see Beresford 2008; Masters 1972; Mellins 2013), it is particularly interesting to note that there have been no previous anthropological studies to identify connections between this and Hollywood's continual use of the vampire or other monsters, for that matter.

Studies have been performed in order to examine the overall social structure of Hollywood, although these have omitted those individuals partially responsible for these monsters--the makeup artists. I myself have been fascinated by the creatures of mythology that find their way to the silver screen, but only recently have I questioned how these portrayals come to life. Are the vampires of film based off of traditional mythology or are the earlier film and television adaptations from the 1920s to the 1960s and 1970s primarily responsible for the modern portrayals of the creatures? Or are there other structures at work, utilizing the social hierarchies of Hollywood or the cultural perspectives of the audience?

While some of the answers to these questions could be obtained by comparing careful observations of vampire films to close readings of the traditional folklore and mythology, the most effective sources are found in the artists who create these monsters. In order to determine the links between mythology and folklore and modern film, I was fortunate to interview five makeup artists who have experience with either vampires, horror, or character design. These

artists graciously provided answers to my questions in order to help me to determine the extent that mythology and folklore influenced their makeup designs.

Participant observation also played a key role in determining the processes behind character design and allowed me to gain a better understanding of how creatures are made and how different artistic mediums, or materials, affect the design. While these experiences did not specifically involve vampire makeups, they were invaluable learning experiences to see the bigger picture. I was also fortunate to begin my study during a time where creature and character design was being pushed to the forefront of literature in the special effects makeup community. Sandy Collora's (2015a, 2015b) project outlining these design elements provided a means of not only understanding what goes into a makeup or character but also provided insight from a number of other makeup artists.

With these sources and resources at hand, this research sets out to make a connection between the mythology and folklore and the creatures and characters of Hollywood using the idea and portrayal of the vampire from the 1980s to the present (2016). In the following section, Chapter 2, I present a literature review of traditional vampire mythology, anthropological studies of Hollywood and the entertainment industry, a selection of vampire filmography, and an overview of special effects makeup and the design processes.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

In film and television, special effects artists use ideas from mythology and this and other societies to inspire creatures that captivate their audiences. One such creature, the vampire, has been the subject of a number of films and television programs since the early 1920s. In each successive adaptation, the vampire is portrayed in various ways, ranging from humanoid to very demonic. While much literature focuses on the origins and characteristics of vampires (see Masters 1972; Mellins 2013; Beresford 2008), few have specifically addressed how cinematic artists have envisioned and then created vampires drawing from the traditional folklore and mythology surrounding them. While there are many ways to approach such a study, this research will specifically examine the folklore and origins of these characters while at the same time accounting for the manner in which they were created. There is little anthropological research on the topic, but existing literature on other social and hierarchical structures in Hollywood and filmmaking (see Ortner 2013; Powdermaker 1950) will also be useful to the study.

Vampires in Folklore

In the twenty-first century, vampires are commonplace on television, in movie theatres, and in books. Modern society is fascinated with these creatures to the point that it is reflected in clothing, online forums, and even a subculture of vampire lovers in London and elsewhere (Mellins 2013). However, the accuracy in these works of fiction in terms of history and the cultural origins of these creatures may be questioned. In order to analyze these traditions in greater detail, it is first necessary to begin with the evolution of the vampire, tracing its origins to the modern depictions found in the media and literature.

Vampiric figures exist in nearly every culture throughout history, from Ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt, Europe, and India, just to name a few. While there is much documentation regarding the existence of vampires, there is often very little information as to what a vampire actually is. Dictionary definitions vary by edition, but taken together all bear a number of similarities. Rising from the grave, sucking blood from their victims, and living/going out mainly at night are the most commonly cited elements, although other ideas include that vampires may be sired by other vampires, by curses, or even by means of suicide or violent death (Masters 1972:2).

Some of the early stories about vampirism are derived from Ireland, the home of Bram Stoker. One of these told of *Abhartach*, a cruel and evil chieftain who was killed by Cathán, another chieftain. After his burial, he arose from the grave and sought fresh blood from his subjects to sustain him. He was again killed, buried, and arose once more. The Druids advised that he be killed with a sword of yew wood, then reinterred upside down with a large stone atop his body. This stone was to remain in place, or *Abhartach* would rise once more (Curran 2000). Another Irish folktale from the Waterford area speaks of beautiful young women known as *dearg-due* who seduce men and drain their blood (Bartlett and Idriceanu 2006).

In the Balkans, vampires were seen as souls protesting the inevitability of death. They are described, at first, as taking ethereal forms, showing their presence in the form of sparks and shadows. In this form they were only able to inflict minimal harm, which was likened to the jokes and trickery of gnomes until a forty-day period has passed. After forty days, the vampires could rise in bodily form and “live” as any other human. At night, they would prey on livestock or other animals to sustain themselves. Vampirism was also considered hereditary, and if a

vampire begot a child, the offspring was made to serve penance in order to absolve the sin and prevent his or her own self from becoming a vampire (Masters 1972).

Balkan vampires could only be disposed of by means of witchcraft. This could have been done by medicine of herbs and excrement left at the opening of the vampire's resting place. Burning the body was also an effective means of prohibiting vampirism, and a practice known as bottling could have been employed by witches to contain the vampire. In this, the witch or sorcerer would trap the vampire in a bottle or vial with a fragment of a religious icon. The vial then was thrown into a fire to destroy the vampire (Masters 1972).

In Romanian folklore, which tends to provide the template for modern conceptualizations of the vampire, it was believed that the soul was not fully separated from the body until forty days after death. This was the time period in which a vampire could be revealed, especially if the individual held certain characteristics that were indicative of vampirism. These often included those who committed suicide, witches, perjurers, unbaptized children, or a corpse that has been passed over by a cat, a nun, or the shadow of the living. It was also thought that some were predestined to become vampires, and that the souls of these individuals would slip from their mouths as they sleep (Masters 1972). Often, the soul of the vampire was thought to escape in the form of a death-head moth, which was to be struck with a pin and mounted to the wall (Beresford 2008).

Three types of vampires were known to exist in Romania. These included the dead vampire type (*stigoi*), the live vampire type (*moroi*), and the mythical vampire type (*vârcolaci*). The *stigoi* were reanimated corpses with their souls returned. *Moroi* are those who are predestined to become vampires after death and are sent out at night to meet with the *stigoi*. Both the dead and live vampire types are associated with witchcraft and black magic. The

vârcolaci however, are a different sort and are characterized as beings with pale faces and dried skin who are able to cause eclipses by eating the sun and moon which becomes covered in red or copper colored blood (Masters 1972). These terms are regional, though will be used for the purposes of this paper for consistency.

In traditional Romanian folklore, vampires and the Devil are closely related. This may be due to the idea that it is difficult to imagine a spirit entity without some form of physical embodiment, and reanimated corpses provided such a vehicle for the Devil's work. Living and dead vampire types are typically born rather than made and exist only at night. The only ways new vampires are created would be through a person's lifestyle, choices, circumstances, or by a *moroi* having children, which will become vampires after their deaths (Beresford 2008).

In Romania, the methods for disposing of a vampire differ greatly from those in the Balkans. Here, precautions were taken at graves before the vampires could rise. These often included driving a stake through the heart or navel of the corpse, placing garlic in its mouth, and burying the body facing downward. Millet, stones, or grains of incense would also be scattered around or within the corpse, to provide something that the vampire must eat or count before rising. Thorned roses could also have been placed around the lid of the coffin to hinder the vampire's escape (Masters 1972).

Creating a Vampire for Cinema and Television

Modern cinematic conventions often portray the vampire in a demonic light, transitioning from human to monstrous (and often back to human again) within the course of the story. The supernatural aspect of vampires has piqued the attention of audiences since the 1920s, beginning with the release of *Nosferatu*. However, it is likely that few in the audience consider how these vampires are brought to life before the cameras. The artists behind these creatures design, sculpt,

paint, and produce three-dimensional prosthetics that are the result of a multi-disciplined artistry (Make Up Forever 2014). Still, good effects do not necessarily make a good movie, as Tom Savini, one of the leading horror artists of the late 1980s, often remarks. In some cases, the artists are employed to make the scenes realistic, but Savini admits that it is up to the writers and directors to make it an enjoyable work of entertainment, no matter how good the effects may be (Waiter 1992).

In addition to writers, directors, and producers, it may take a team of 20-30 individuals to create successful makeups for each production, though typically only a few key artists are credited with the work. Glenn Hetrick, makeup artist and owner of Optic Nerve Special Effects, explained that to bring the writer's conception onto screen the artists must "provide the director with a three-dimensional reality that exceeds his expectations and shocks the audience" (Make Up Forever 2014). In order to create a successful makeup, one first needs to conceptualize the makeup by sketching the design to determine symmetry and layout. This requires reading the scripts and discussing the character with the director in order to design something that fits the movie (Waiter 1992: 194).

When examining the creative processes involved in vampiric makeup, there is, a noticeable lack of literature on how these ideas may be conceived by reference to folklore, mythology, modern popular culture, theatrical conventions, and the community of makeup artists themselves. The origins of theatrical traditions involving makeup conventions and masks of the Kabuki theater may be of particular interest, as some of the underlying forms are quite similar to the structure of vampire makeup. This appears especially noticeable in terms of the forehead and brows. Some of the underlying ideas of Kabuki theater also focus on the opposing manifestations of a god, those being the hero and the demon (Yamaguchi 1991). Studies of

innovation and tradition within special effects makeup are scarce. Instead, studies have often been conducted in the fields of cinematography, psychology, and economics in order to examine things like the influence of budget on cinematic creativity (see Simonton 2005), as well as to determine if age and gender have any effect on an individual's preference of horror movie monsters (see Fischhoff et al. 2008). Within the industry, there seems to be only one series of note that explores the notions of design, inspiration, and creativity in depth (see Collora 2015a; 2015b).

Literature within the Industry

Previously, most of the works published within the special effects industry focused on transmitting knowledge of makeup effects to upcoming artists. Books by Dick Smith (1968), Michael Westmore (1973), and Tom Savini (1983) were and remain essential resources for anyone learning special effects makeup out of their home, but these texts often omitted the foundations of these designs and practices. Sandy Collora's *The Art of Character and Creature Design* (2015a) appears to be one the first in the industry to highlight the creative processes behind a number of iconic designs instead of simply teaching the techniques of special effects. Featuring interviews with a number of well-known artists in the industry, Collora (2015a) covers topics such as inspiration, form--the basis for believable and organic designs (see Collora 2015a: 59), design sensibilities, imagination, computer-generated imagery (CGI) vs. practical effects, and the idea of style vs. stylized.

Todd Debrececi (2013: 490) defines practical effects within his definition of special effects (SFX). Here, he describes SFX as the use of "physical effects usually accomplished during live-action shooting. This includes the use of mechanized props, scenery, and scale model miniatures, and pyrotechnics." Computer generated imagery, or CGI, is often referred to

using the term visual effects and features digital makeup effects created using computer-based digital modeling software (Debreceeni 2013: 1).

Before exploring the implications of these ideas, it is necessary to first discuss the differences between practical effects and CGI. While artists, actors, actresses, and other industry professionals have expressed varying opinions on the matter, there is no clear answer to the debate surrounding the usage of practical effects versus CGI. However, a recent trend is emerging with filmmakers choosing practical effects for their creations or blending these with elements of CGI. The idea of collaboration is also present in the industry, from the initial phases of a project to the execution and editing processes. Often, it is this collaboration that decides upon the use of practical effects and CGI in film and television.

Each of these techniques holds value to the entertainment industry, just as each comes with its own set of limitations. Practical effects are bound by physics and must conform to reality. An artist or a team of artists must create these effects from foam and greasepaint, which may prove difficult depending on timeframe and project. CGI effects, on the other hand, are not bound by any physical, monetary, or personnel limitations. Most artists believe that a blend of the two are helpful and necessary for a successful film (Konow 2013).

Industry great Rick Baker, known for films such as *American Werewolf in London* (1981), *Men in Black* (1997), and *Gremlins 2* (1990), recognizes CGI as "an amazing tool, and it's only as good as the artist behind it" (Konow 2013). Some movies would not be possible without the use of CGI, as is the case of *Pacific Rim* (2013), but in other cases (as with the industry's largely negative perception of the combination of CGI and practical effects used in *Van Helsing* in 2004), it can be a detriment to the film. Joe Alves, production designer on *Jaws* (1975) and *Close Encounters* (1977), adds to this, saying that because of the convenience

associated with CGI, it can go overboard. However, if done properly, CGI can augment practical effects, which may be otherwise difficult to accomplish (Konow 2013).

More recently, films have featured a strong preference for practical effects, perhaps in response to the CGI vs. Practical Effects debate. Guillermo Del Toro's *Crimson Peak* (2015) masterfully blended practical effects and digital designs in order to create haunting effects for the resident ghosts. Rob Letterman's adaptation of *Goosebumps* (2015) ordered a horde of actors in makeups and monster suits (Nazzaro 2015a). *Victor Frankenstein* (2015), a low-budget prequel to the original Frankenstein story, utilized rod puppets and animatronics as well as multiple prosthetics (Nazarro 2015b). Finally, *Black Mass* (2015) used heavy prosthetics to transform Johnny Depp into Scott Cooper's vision of James 'Whitey' Bulger (Buscaino 2015).

Goosebumps called for 67 different characters in the film to be handled primarily by the digital effects team, makeup artists, or the wardrobe department. Of these, 27 or 28 of the characters were the primary responsibility of the makeup department to create practically, with production adding up to 14 more during shooting because of how well they were received on camera (Nazarro 2015a). *Black Mass* takes place over a long span of time, which required makeup artists to create a series of old age makeups for Depp who appeared as a 40-, 50-, 68-, and 83-year-old Whitey Bulger. While the 40-year-old version consisted of a single silicone bald cap appliance and a separate nose piece, the 83-year-old makeup required 12 separate prosthetics. Each of these appliances took nearly 22 hours to punch the hair and brows into each appliance (one each for the 50 days of shooting). The only digital medium used for the movie's makeup was found in Depp's lifecast, which was a scanned replica of his head and shoulders that was recreated and used to sculpt the appliances. These were created from digital models and allowed the artists to have multiple copies if needed (Buscaino 2015).

Crimson Peak and *Victor Frankenstein* perhaps made the best use of combining practical effects and CGI to effectively convey their characters. The ghosts of *Crimson Peak* were actors in foam latex bodysuits and prosthetics, created by DDT Efectos Especiales and Roland Blancaflor of RBFX. The makeups are described as expressionistic and artfully reflected the way the women died (Nazarro 2015a). Finally, these prosthetics and suits had to be augmented with CGI in order to remove elements and create gaping holes in the corpses to produce the final look. *Victor Frankenstein* used practical effects to create an ape/hyena hybrid rod puppet and animatronic, which was then enhanced with CGI due to the need for quick high action scenes, which could not be accommodated with puppetry alone. In addition to the puppets, Millennium FX created Frankenstein's Monster using 15 prosthetics. The monster was made completely with practical effects and did not need digital additions (Nazarro 2015b).

While it may seem easy to dismiss the use of CGI and digital renderings in favor of practical effects, the reality is that the two may often be more intertwined than not. While one or two key personnel are credited for each department, it takes a large number of people working together for a production to come to fruition. Hours of collaboration, designs, and execution are involved for even short segments of a film or television show. These efforts determine how the effects will be created, and oftentimes, it is more efficient or more suitable to blend reality with the digital realm to create fantastical worlds. If the production team and artists are good, so too will be the effects. Unconvincing CGI has left a poor perception of the medium by the public and some industry professionals, but when executed properly, with the addition of practical effects, these fantastical scenes can be created in such a way as to root them in reality to capture and maintain the audience's attention.

Within Collora's first volume (2015a: 3), sculptors, designers, and makeup artists such as Jordu Schell, Steve Wang, and Joel Harlow speak of their experience in special effects. Here, Jordu Schell describes design as subjective, but there is still a "right and wrong." No matter the character type, it must mimic nature and have plausible anatomy and proportion; otherwise it will not be believable. Making something that reads true relies on the careful observation of nature and imagination, even if the creature or design is fanciful. However, Schell points out that there is limited freedom to create original characters in Hollywood that have design implications similar to that of Giger's *Alien*, as companies fear losing money on a film or design—a sentiment that is echoed by a number of artists within the volume (Collora 2015a).

Joel Harlow also speaks to this idea of natural and organic forms within a design and notes that the use of practical effects as opposed to CGI creatures aid in making a believable character. To make this point, he cites Rob Bottin's *The Thing* (1982) as one of the most innovative and transformational designs in film with its combination of "a visceral reality and a kind of beauty" (Collora 2015a: 62). The 2011 remake utilized CGI characters instead of these practical effects, and the effect of the original forms was lost (Collora 2015a).

Steve Wang discusses the implications of CGI on creature design, stating that it allows characters to surpass what physics would allow in terms of materials and texture. As a result, designs may be more outlandish and may not always be rooted in reality. In addition, Wang notes that the lack of iconic designs in modern Hollywood are likely not attributed to an increased use of CGI over practical effects, but instead are due to directors who do not understand creatures or their forms (Collora 2015a).

Many of the other artists in this volume echo similar sentiments in terms of form and the lack of originality in modern film. Collora's (2015a) volume takes his readers inside the

industry, and continues to do so in a second volume, which homes in on the design process to feature maquette (or scale model) sculpting and design (Collora 2015b). The second volume discusses similar ideas of form, pose, and anatomy, though these will not be discussed for the purposes of this project.

Anthropological Contributions

In anthropology, the most relevant study of Hollywood is that of Hortense Powdermaker in 1950, perhaps the only full-scale anthropological examination of Hollywood. In this analysis, she studied the society of the film industry to determine if the social networks in the industry were the driving force behind the content of films. This was done by looking at the social processes related to the writers, producers, directors, and actors. Powdermaker (1950:39) identified marked differences in power by role, and described the film making process as a result as "mechanized" and "mass-production." She also saw film content as a reflection of current values as well as a catalyst for social change. The cultural setting during which a film was produced directly reflected what Hollywood placed on screen for its audience. Powdermaker's idea of social content related to film and filmmaking has since been explored by social science scholars beginning with Sklar in 1975 (Cherneff 1991; Silverman 2007).

Sherry Ortner (2003) examines another area of cinema with her study on independent film. This study begins with a general definition of independent or "indie" film which is characterized by lower budgets, challenging subject matter with a political or critical motive, are higher realism, and only rarely happy endings in contrast to "Hollywood" or "studio" films. These films have made themselves viable alternatives to Hollywood movies and are attracting large audiences and established filmmakers. Independent films are also noted to be considered "too violent, too sexually perverse, too depressing, too morally ambiguous, or perhaps simply too

weird for Hollywood screens" (Ortner 2013: 10). Ortner (2013: 259) calls these independent films examples of "public culture," which allow for commentaries on various social realities. By not following the traditional Hollywood models of film, these independent filmmakers are able to push the limits and tackle nearly any subject.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In order to determine the links between vampire makeup designs and vampire folklore, as well as to further the anthropological literature regarding the structure and division of labor within Hollywood, and particularly within makeup artistry, it was necessary to gain an understanding of special effects and horror, but it was critical to hear these ideas from the artists themselves. I realized that to properly understand what was happening behind the scenes, I needed to speak with a number of makeup artists in addition to listening to and reading live streams, webcasts, and published interviews. Participant observation was also necessary, as I had little to no background in the ideas of horror or advanced special effects. I also found it useful for this research to immerse myself in horror and vampire films in order to try to understand the designs and how they relate to the issues contained in this research. Each time an artist mentioned a film I had not heard of or seen, I made every effort to find the film and watch it as soon as possible (for a list of these films, see Appendix A).

Due to the scope and research subjects, this project falls under the description of a focused ethnography. Focused ethnography has typically been employed in practical fields such as nursing or medicine, however, it has become increasingly useful in anthropological research, especially that which requires a deliverable such as a thesis. This methodology is used to study specific research questions within smaller subgroups (Wall 2015).

As this project studies Hollywood's makeup artists, particularly those who have worked with vampire or horror makeups, focused ethnography proves useful, as only a small subset of artists work with this genre of makeup. Focused ethnography also involves the use of a predetermined set of questions, which help to shape the research, as opposed to allowing field experiences to directly shape the research (Wall 2015). In this, I found it helpful to begin asking

questions about vampires in general before moving to more specific questions about individual films and characters (see appendix B for a list of these questions).

These interviews were completed with five makeup artists, creature designers, and sculptors who were interviewed by phone, electronic communication (such as Skype), or in person over the course of this study. These include Emmy and Oscar winners and nominees, although some run independent studios or formally teach upcoming artists. A number of the artists interviewed have worked on successful vampire films, while others have a great deal of experience in the design process by which a character comes to life. A list of artists interviewed and their selected filmography may be found in Table 1.

Artist	Selected Vampire Filmography	Selected Filmography
Sandy Collora	N/a	Men in Black (1999), Dogma (2000), Batman: Dead End (2003)
Robert Kurtzman	Children of the Night (1991), Vampire in Brooklyn (1995), From Dusk Til Dawn (1996), Vampires (1998)	A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child (1989), Army of Darkness (1992), Oz the Great and Powerful (2013), Tusk (2014)
Michèle Burke	Dracula (1992), Interview with the Vampire (1994)	Quest for Fire (1981), The Cell (2000)
Scott Fensterer	N/a	The Wind Up Boy (2011), Maiden to Monster (2012), Face Off (2015),
Jennifer Dean	N/a	Independent films; Published work in makeup magazines

Table 1: Artists and their selected filmography.

In terms of the interviews, I began the project intending to ask the same questions to each artist, only varying when a specific film or series was involved. However, once I learned more about the inner structure of the industry, I realized that this methodology was not suitable for all of my informants. Instead, the questions had to be tailored for each type of artist, as character

and creature designers, makeup artists, and sculptors all had a different role in the creation process, which also could have yielded a different understanding of specific design elements. This deviated from practices in standard focused ethnography, as some situations called for different questions instead of sticking to a single routine questionnaire. The interviews typically lasted 15-20 minutes and were scheduled at the convenience of the artist. While many of these interviews were semi-structured, which allowed me to pick and choose questions based on the direction of the answers and the overall tone of the interview, other artists chose a more unstructured path. Here, instead of guiding the conversation from the beginning with my questions, the artists' discussions of the topic set the tone for the style and direction of the interview.

Many artists were extremely interested in my project, even if their schedules did not allow me to interview them at the time. Due to my informants' heavy work schedules, in many cases there were only small windows of time in which I could conduct the interviews due to production schedules, appearances, or other obligations. As a result, I also utilized indirect interviews in books, magazines, and wherever behind-the-scenes issues were discussed, especially a relatively new series mentioned above regarding the design and creation processes (see Collora 2015a; Collora 2015b).

In addition to these interviews, I used participant observation to gain an in-depth examination of the design processes and underlying elements of horror and character creation. When selecting participant observation opportunities, I searched first for events, which combined both horror and special effects makeup. This search yielded a number of opportunities, particularly on the West Coast, which unfortunately were not feasible for me to attend due to funding and the timing of the events.

However, I discovered that Kosart Effects Studio in Westmont, Illinois taught classes on design, form, and anatomy. From this studio, I learned of conventions and tradeshow in the Midwest and the East Coast that would be more feasible to attend. Two of these were Midwest Haunters Convention in Columbus, Ohio, and the Halloween Mask Association's Mask-Fest Indianapolis, Indiana. I also learned of a Dark Arts Exhibition held at the Kosart Gallery, also in Westmont, Illinois, which featured a variety of mediums and a number of well-known artists from around the world. While at these events, I gained not only a working knowledge of the makeup materials and processes, but also a valuable understanding of the notions of horror that I had previously overlooked.

While I approached many of these more formally, others were more suited for Geertz's (1998) method of deep hanging out. Spooky Empire in Orlando Florida was one such opportunity. Here, the purchase of a VIP convention ticket allowed access to more informal areas of the show more suited to this notion of deep hanging out. This allowed me better access to a number of the professionals in attendance, but it also allowed me to become part of the community where I could blend in and ask questions as needed without being such an outsider. This idea was also employed at the VIP after-party, which afforded a completely informal area away from the structure of the booths and vendor areas to have a better chance to interact with attendees, guests, and convention staff. Here, deep hanging out was the most natural choice, as the setting was not ideal for standard formal methods of participant observation.

Due to its nature as thesis, this study had to be sent to the IRB for approval prior to participant observation opportunities or artist interviews. By employing ethnographic methods to collect data, it was possible to gain considerable insight into the design processes that allow artists to use traditional designs to create something new that can be enjoyed by a modern

audience. Interviewing these artists provided a behind the scenes understanding of the designs and concepts that otherwise would not have been possible by only watching the films themselves. In many cases, the artists brought up points that I had not considered, or even noticed, in the films, and often I had to alter both my questions and interpretations to incorporate some of this new data.

CHAPTER 4: DATA

As described in the previous chapter, participant-observation and interviews with five makeup effects artists provided a great deal of insight into the genre of horror, the special effects industry, and the design and creation of vampires for film and television since the 1980s. Events such as Midwest Haunter's Convention, Spooky Empire Retro, and The HMA's Mask-Fest offered a wealth of information on horror tropes, general designs, and the division of labor within the special effects industry, while an On-Skin Silicone FX class gave an insider's view of the processes behind some of these design concepts and makeups. A Dark Art exhibition provided information about the elements of horror and artistic perceptions of the vampire. Interviews with effects artists, sculptors, and creature designers within the industry also gave crucial insight regarding creature and character design as well as a number of successful vampire makeups.

Participant Observation

While the On-Skin Silicone FX class held at Kosart Atelier in Westmont, Illinois did not focus specifically on vampires, the ideas of character and design were prominent during the two-day course taught by lead instructor and founder, Anthony Kosar. Kosar is perhaps best known for his time on *Face Off*, the makeup competition television series on SyFy, where he was the winner of Season 4. The first day of the class focused on learning the basics of a two-part silicone medium known as 3rd Degree and learning about the elements of creating realistic wounds and trauma makeup and the general elements of character design such as form and anatomy. The class consisted of eight participants, all from vastly different occupations, including teachers, high school principals, retail workers, students, freelance makeup artists, and haunted house workers. Everyone had come into the class with a different level of experience in

special effects as well. Most had already taken a number of courses at Kosart Atelier while others were relatively new to the discipline. I was a bit apprehensive, as I had only taken a prosthetics application and painting demonstration workshop taught by RJ Haddy in Dayton, Ohio. Otherwise, aside from having a basic working knowledge of some of these techniques, I was a newcomer to the world of horror, and particularly zombies. However, Kosar alleviated some of my fears after he told me that I was doing really well with the materials and that I excelled at blending edges and matching paint to skin tones--two techniques that are often difficult even for skilled artists. I left the studio ready to take on the next day's task of creating a zombie.

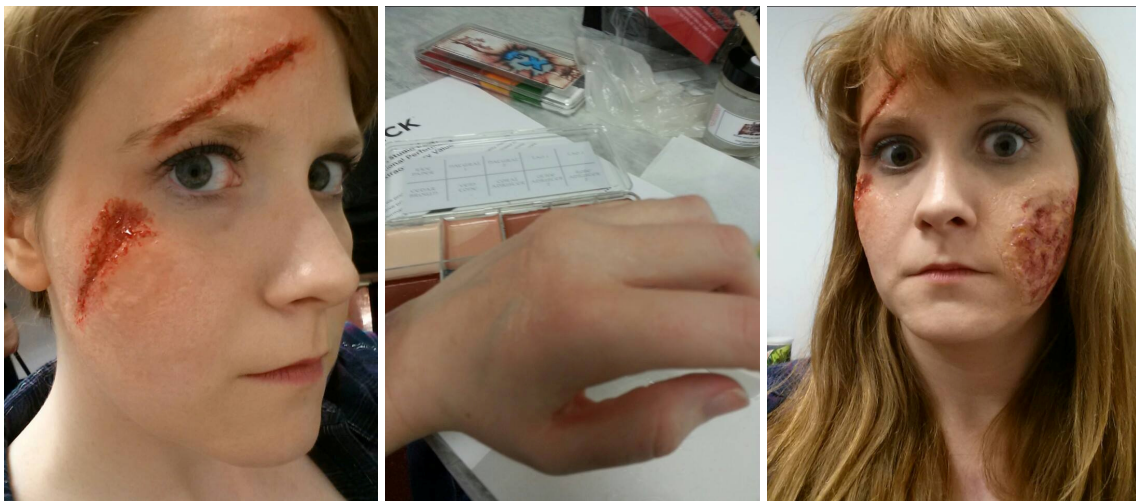


Figure 1 (left): Close-up of trauma makeup using silicone fx (makeup by the author)
Figure 2 (center): Swollen knuckles painted to simulate skin tone (makeup by the author)
Figure 3 (right): Completed cut and acid burn trauma makeup (makeup by the author)

This difference in background and experience came to light the second day of the class when we were to create our own zombie character on a fellow student. Our instructions were to bring in sketches, online reference images, or similar designs in order to inspire and guide our makeups and to keep a firm grasp on human anatomy. This appeared to be a critical aspect of any successful makeup, because the audience must be able to see and recognize forms and

anatomy within the design. The only stipulation we were given was to focus on changing our model's facial structure; otherwise we were free to make our own stylistic design choices.

We began the day organizing our makeup kits and discussing our reference images with the other students. Joe Kosar, Anthony's father, came into the classroom and told us to begin our makeups, and we started our work. Throughout the process, Anthony and Joe examined our work, and made small suggestions regarding color and form to improve the makeups. There was only one case where Anthony had to suggest that a student completely change a part of their design; otherwise we were encouraged to continue with new and interesting forms so long as they mimicked anatomy.

The final characters differed greatly in terms of design and execution. One student created a zombie reminiscent of a George Romero film, with sunken features and a blueish skin tone, while others utilized hanging flesh, exposed bone, and blood splatter. The color palettes ranged from blues and purplish bruised tones to greens, greys, and yellows. No two zombies were remotely alike, even though a few students drew from the same reference images. I think this is likely due to their different preferences for zombie films. As we worked there were discussions of zombie comedies like *Fido* and *Shaun of the Dead*, gritty television shows like *The Walking Dead*, and classics such as Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*, and most students had strong opinions on which were more interesting in terms of design.



Figure 4 (left): Silicone zombie makeup completed in 2015 at Kosart Atelier for the class (makeup by the author)

Figure 5 (right): Foamed gelatin zombie makeup completed March 2016 based on concepts learned from the class (makeup by the author)

While in the course, Anthony Kosar revealed an interesting element of the design process. He noted that artists tend to use distinct stylistic elements in their characters, consciously or unconsciously depending on the overall type of character. These familiar forms often are present in the brow and expressions of similar types of creatures. It was also noted that some artists prefer to focus on monsters and scarier themes, while others primarily work with beauty or fantasy makeups. However, even with this distinction, an artist must be flexible and know how to do other makeup types when needed.

Midwest Haunters Convention in Columbus, Ohio, provided a tradeshow atmosphere with horrific scenes, props, and displays around every corner. Most of the booths had very similar elements. A number of these vendors focused on zombies, body parts, and clowns. Static characters were positioned around the tradeshow floor and consisted mainly of zombies, clowns, and pop culture characters such as Pyramid Head and Twisty the Clown. The Kosart Effects Studio booth focused on the 1930s literature of HP Lovecraft's *Innsmouth*, and featured a fish creature makeup demonstration that turned one of Anthony Kosar's students into a Deep One (see image below). The *Innsmouth* Project, designed by photographer Joshua Hoffine, was a

crowd funded horror photography project inspired by the 1931 horror novella *The Shadow over Innsmouth* written by H.P. Lovecraft, whose work often featured themes of malign aquatic life. The booth also featured display busts in varying stages of these *Innsmouth* Deep One transformations illustrating the loss of humanity of the creatures.



Figure 6 (left): Kosart Effects Studio's "Deep One" demonstration from Midwest Hunters Convention. Figure 7 (right): Various transformative stages of the completed Deep Ones at the HMA's Mask-Fest.

Another booth had more alien looking masks and busts. Only Morphstore (a Florida-based prosthetics company) and one other booth had vampire masks or prosthetics. One of these closely resembled the vampires in the *Lost Boys* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* while the other depicted Blacula from the 1972 film of the same name.

In terms of the notion of horror, images of death, blood, guts, and gore were forefront, as was the false comfort of safety. A young lady wearing a white bloodied and tattered gown with a bloodied face with two protruding tentacles resembling those of H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulu hanging from her face "pegged" me as an easy scare. She stood still as if to become one of the display pieces that were present at many of the booths and jumped towards me with a yell as I drew even with her. Another booth used a similar tactic. There, an actor in costume and prosthetics stood among a series of caged animatronics until an unassuming bystander got too close to the display. While the bystander was viewing the display, the actor sprang from the cage and ran toward the

crowd with a shout. However, even among gruesome images of death and harm were elements of humor as coffin coolers, soft drink dispensers, and coffee brands featuring feet with toe tags could be found on the tradeshow floor.



Figure 8 (left): Severed limbs at one vendor's booth

Figure 9 (right): A static zombie display

The Halloween Mask Association's (HMA's) Mask-Fest, held in conjunction with Horrorhound Weekend, in Indianapolis, Indiana provided additional insight into the special effects industry and creature and character design. The convention consisted of three days featuring panels, artists, and vendors selling masks and products that depicted horrific and fantastic creatures. This show had considerably less gore than the other events and did not primarily feature themes of death as did Midwest Haunter's Convention, although two or three vendors were the same. Instead, there appeared to be more of a focus on character and form language (or the way the character's overall design reads to an audience in order to portray the meaning even without context). Artists were also available to sign autographs and speak about their experiences in the industry.

For me, the first day of the convention primarily served as an orientation to the vendors and artists in attendance. It appeared that although there was a variety of shapes and forms present on the show floor, some of the overall stylistic themes and character types were relatively similar at a number of booths. Jack o' lanterns, ghouls, zombies, witches, and movie masks were

everywhere. The few vampire masks had predominantly bat-like features, with an emphasis on a bat nose, a heavy brow, and pointed ears. The main panel of interest, the K 'and' B Reunion panel with Robert Kurtzman and Howard Berger, provided some insight as to how studios worked in the industry. Kurtzman, Berger, and Greg Nicotero founded KNB EFX, Inc., which was (and remains) responsible for the effects in a number of films and television series, including *Army of Darkness* (1992), *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* (2005), and most recently, *The Walking Dead* (2010-present). During their talk, they discussed the lack of iconic creatures currently in the media, noting a departure from original forms such as John Carpenter's *The Thing* (1982), as well as the idea that directing a film and running a studio provided a great deal of freedom in terms of character development.



Figure 10: The K 'and' B Reunion Panel at Mask-Fest

The second day of Mask-Fest featured two panels depicting very different sides of the industry. The first, an independent (or indie) filmmakers panel, addressed social commentary and subtext in film. Because they do not work with major film companies, indie filmmakers have more freedom to create their own visions and characters. Generally, the goal is to create a horror film to take the viewer away from the real world and not provide commentary on real-world happenings. However, these social commentaries often come as subtext within the film and sometimes subconsciously inspire the story. These subtexts may represent a political event

or a social or environmental issue present in an area that is of interest to the filmmaker. The filmmakers also described how a past or recent crime may elicit a particular manner of death in a film. In this, the filmmakers described cases where a character's fate may resemble a true murder they had seen or read about in the news media. There was a strong disparity in making a film that was topical and making a film about which the writer or director was passionate; the general consensus focused on a desire to make something that people would want to watch for entertainment instead of social commentary. To the panelists, topical films appeared to be viewed as deliberate attempts at commentary that did not necessarily seem to fit the horror genre. This is not to say that all horror films are deliberately without a strong commentary, as will be discussed below with Sandy Collora's independent film project, *Shallow Water*.

The *Face Off* panel with Ve Neill, Neville Page, and Glenn Hetrick revealed the Hollywood side of the industry and discussed a distinct division of labor within special effects. All makeup artists do not create the design for a character. Instead, there are a number of designers, sculptors, shop owners, and technicians who determine the character's features based on the script, director, and production team. There is also a primary makeup artist who applies the character's prosthetics, or otherwise designs and applies fantasy or beauty makeup. It is very much a collaborative effort, as each may have a different opinion on how the character should look. Here, a compromise must be made to satisfy the needs of the film or series (see the interview with Michèle Burke below). The overall goal is a difficult one--to try to create something that has never been done, yet will still be recognizable to an audience.



Figure 11: Glenn Hetrick, Ve Neill, and Neville Page during The *Face Off* Panel at Mask-Fest

Kosart Effects Gallery's Fifth Annual Maleficium Dark Art Exhibition held at the Kosart Gallery in Westmont, Illinois, gave an industry perspective on the various notions of horror, including that of the vampire. The show, which was curated by J. Anthony Kosar, featured paintings, sculptures, and mixed media pieces by professional effects artists, directors, painters, and photographers from around the world. No two pieces of art were the same, although there were a number of overarching horrific conventions present among the displays.

Upon entering the gallery, I was faced with a number of eerie, visually interesting, and familiar images¹. The space was divided into two main rooms. The first was somewhat small, with narrow spaces in which to view the artwork. The second area was much larger and had an open area in the center.

In the first room, I immediately began to notice the presence of piercing stares and menacing glances in the artwork, particularly within the paintings. Oftentimes, these glares featured dark or empty eyes below prominent brows that stared directly at the viewer. The most striking item in the room, to me, also featured prominent eyes. However, this was unlike most of the others in the space. It was a painting of Dracula by Greg Hildebrandt. Here, a well-dressed gentleman stared with glowing red eyes at a woman dressed in white. The eyes provided a stark

¹ These images have been withheld at the request of the gallery lacking artist permissions.

contrast to the muted colors of the seaside backdrop and the clothing. I only noticed the vampire's fangs once I was able to turn my eyes away from the transfixing gaze.

The remainder of the room featured images of death peppered with creatures from mythology and popular culture. Some of the artwork took a somewhat humorous approach to death, as in a painting entitled "Cock Block" by Grigor Eftmov that featured a raven with a human skull perched atop a stone block, which was placed among the more serious scenes. Other nearby pieces featured demonic grins bearing sharpened teeth, demented clowns, and mixed media artwork that combined creatures such as a rat and a goblin.

I turned the corner into the second room and was in awe of the multitude of interesting art along the walls. The larger space made it easier to get a general sense of the material, and I immediately spotted artwork by a number of my informants and from other participant observation opportunities. My gaze then fell on two items tied to the vampire – a large bust and a painting placed side by side in the far corner. The first of these was a mixed media bust by Wayne Anderson entitled "Dracubus." This was a bat-like creature devoid of human characteristics. Its dark eyes seemed to stare directly through me as I stood in front of it. The second piece was a painting of the "Vampire Duveneck" by Jim Pavelec, which was a well-dressed gentleman with blank white eyes and razor sharp fangs. The contrast between these two figures was striking, and to me, seemed to characterize the extremes of the artistic depictions of the vampire, which are continually present and alternate in film and television.

Other images in the space again featured figures from popular culture, including a bust of the vampire from General Mills' Count Chocula cereal sculpted by Rob Miller. While this was a more cartoonish representation of a vampire, it fit well within the humorous elements of the show. Another bat-like, and I suppose, vampiric sculpture was "Nocturne" by Dan Chudzinski.

This was a mechanized, faceless beast with bat ears dressed in a leather vest adorned with patches featuring bats. Looking back, aside from the name and patches, I'm not sure why I had considered this to specifically be a vampire, but for whatever reason, the piece was striking although more abstract.

The loss of humanity was also a popular theme within the artwork. Just inside the door, a latex bust by Jordu Schell entitled "Genetic Mutation III" was so lifelike and full of emotion that I felt it could have easily been mutated from a human. A depiction of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" by Jeremy Wilson illustrated the transformation of a genteel doctor into a monster, and at the center of it all was Joshua Hoffine's "Innsmouth" photograph. The busts I had seen at Mask-Fest framed the massive photograph of various transformations of the Deep Ones surrounding actor Doug Jones, as if threatening to turn him into one of their own. While I had initially left the gallery questioning how it all fit together, it would seem that this fear of the loss of humanity and the loss of control that the piercing stares appeared to illustrate were two important elements of horror in the art.

The final look at some of these notions of horror was found at Spooky Empire Retro, a horror convention in Orlando, Florida held April 1-3, 2016. This event allowed me to gain an understanding of the ideas of retro or classic horror so as to provide a baseline for the new-age horror characters in television and film today. I went there with a clear set of objectives and expectations, which were to interview a number of effects artists, conduct participant observation to determine the retro forms and designs of vampires, and to gain an understanding of what makes a horror character scary to an audience. Things did not go exactly as I had planned, but the results were still interesting and informative as I used methods of deep hanging out to guide my research.

While I usually buy only a standard pass to any convention, after regretting the decision to defer on the VIP ticket option at Mask-Fest in Indianapolis, I had decided to buy VIP tickets for Spooky Empire to see if it might afford me better access for my research. I knew going into it that this would be a new adventure, as I felt a bit out of place for some of the horror conventions I have attended previously, but I was not really sure what to expect. At 6:20 p.m. on Thursday evening, I walked over to the main lobby from my hotel room to pick up my ticket. Coming from the hotel, it was a bit of a maze. From the main lobby, you turn into a long and elegantly decorated hallway. Then there is a ramp and stairs to go up half a level where you are faced with a giant mirror as you turn into the doorway. It was a bit disorienting. From there, the hallway continued past numerous ballrooms until you reached the main foyer of the convention center. The Will Call booth was nearly at the end, near the main entrance doors. The only people in sight were organizers, volunteers, and vendors setting up their booths early.

Just from picking up my ticket, I realized that this was likely a convention that was ‘haunted’ by locals in the area more than by people traveling from all over. I handed the man my ID and one of the other organizers looks at me and said “Surely you didn’t come in all the way from West Virginia to come to Spooky?” I chuckled and said “Well, not exactly. I’m in grad school in Indiana, so I actually came down from Muncie.” That was met with a “You’re kidding?!” and the reaction was similar when I told them I had never purchased a VIP pass before, let alone attended a Spooky Empire convention. After a bit of a show on their part (teasing and proclaiming that I was a Spooky Empire “virgin” and had to be read the riot act and potentially ceremoniously dunked into one of the pools later!) and a lot of laughing, I was at ease about the convention and did not feel out of place at all. Returning to my room, I had a chance to look over the contents of my bag. Sure enough, with this VIP ticket package, I would have

much better access to the convention with this type of ticket, including panels, extended floor hours, and a special after-party with informal access to vendors and guests. Now I just had to wait for the sun to set for the kickoff to the con.



Figure 12: The VIP ticket and package for Spooky Empire Retro

The kickoff to the con was not what I expected. It was very informal with music and a showing of *Weird Science* and the crowd was relatively sparse. There were a few groups of three to five people and one celebrity in attendance. Several were dressed in '80s attire (the theme of the evening) with netting and neon, there was a guy on a unicycle, and there were girls dressed as Beetlejuice and Strawberry Shortcake. There were also several men in white suits reminiscent of Don Johnson from *Miami Vice*. I realized then that I was missing several movie references and themes just because I had been focusing so narrowly on vampire films. I was thankful to be able to call on friends and family who were able to help me identify characters, television series, and movies after being given a description of the clothing.

The annual Zombie Walk was next on the agenda. Like many of the other situations I have found myself in for this research, I had never previously attended a zombie walk. Before

the On-Skin Silicone FX class at Kosart Atelier, I was not very interested in zombies. But studying the forms and what made them scary, sympathetic, or whimsical helped me to not only understand what made the zombie a good monster, but to also apply it to the forms and ideas of the vampire. I arrived at Uno Pizzeria across the street from the convention center at noon on April 1, and I saw that a number of local makeup artists had set up stations to turn willing clients into members of the undead. One was a face painter, one had been on *Face Off*, and the others were local effects artists.

Three of the stations were occupied when I walked up, and it was Todd Gibson of Diabolical Laboratories who was tasked with turning me into a member of the undead. I had ripped and distressed some old clothes I had in a work bin, so he took my costume and decided that I should be a battle-worn zombie. He started with a dirty tan color and teased that he had to give me an airbrush tan before he could turn me! Apparently I was too light and pale to be a real zombie, let alone a battle-worn one. As I watched him layer paint on me with his airbrush, we ended up talking more about the process and products themselves instead of design specifics. I did notice, however, that he would airbrush following the musculature on my arms and legs as he made use of highlights, shadows, and veining. When he moved to the face, the aim was to accentuate the cheekbones and eye sockets to mimic the use of a prosthetic and enhance the facial structure to produce a bony and sunken appearance.



Figure 13 (left): Makeup artist Todd Gibson applies veining to my arms
(photo credit: Michael Gavin)

Figure 14 (right): Gibson following anatomy to create a sunken appearance
(photo credit: PTMO Studios)

I noticed that the other artists seemed to be following similar ideas of form and inspiration from the individual's costuming in order to create the makeup. One of the photographers came up to me while I watched the scene and commented on my "Mostly Harmless" shirt, which (I did not realize at the time) was a reference to *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (2005). We began to talk a bit about the zombie walk and convention, and when Michael found out that this was my first time at Spooky Empire, he told me that he felt that this was one of the better conventions in the area and that people often return twice a year in the spring and around Halloween to reconnect as a sort of 'Spooky Family.' Sure enough, many of the people on the patio had greeted each other as old friends. Because of this, I now had my first key informant.

As 4 p.m. drew nearer, more participants began to enter the scene. There were zombie Disney princesses, a zombie Monopoly Man, a zombie hunter Santa Claus, many characters from the Walking Dead, a few pop art zombies created by the face painter, Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash zombies, a group dressed as members of the cult of *Cthulu* bearing "Cthulu for President" signs, and to lead us all to the convention was Mike Christoper--the Hare Krishna zombie from George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* (1978). It was quite the event. Traffic backed

up on International Drive and Sand Lake Road as passersby slowed to honk, take pictures, or look on in confusion at the horde of the undead stumbling and shambling down the sidewalk. Those dressed as zombie hunters from the *Walking Dead* held back traffic at stoplights so everyone could cross safely. We reached the convention center by 4:30 p.m., and I entered through the VIP entrance with a number of others while the rest waited until 5 p.m. for the doors to officially open.



Figure 15 (left): The horde of zombies ready for the zombie walk (photo credit: PTMO Studios)

Figure 16 (right): Completed zombie makeup by Todd Gibson (photo credit: Michael Gavin)

The convention center space seemed a bit small at first. I began by walking through the vendor room, which was filled with rows of tables with various kinds of merchandise. It only took me about 12 minutes to make my way around once, but then as I began to actually look around me instead of mentally mapping the area, I realized the complexity of the imagery. The booths featured merchandise and references to a number of classic, retro, and new-age horror films but the theme tended to focus on the movies of the 1970s, and 1980s with a few moving into the early 1990s. Frankenstein was everywhere, but that was not altogether surprising due to the use of the classic monster in Spooky Empire's logo. I found direct and indirect references to movies and television series such as *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986), *Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), *Weird Science* (1985), *Friday the 13th* (1980), *Godzilla* (1950s-present), and *Ultraman* (1972) at several of the tables. Zombies permeated the space as well, and there were even makeup artists and vendors offering zombie makeup applications for attendees throughout the

weekend. There was also a lot of *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954) memorabilia as well as a few references to *The Invisible Man* (1933). What seemed strange to me was the initial lack of vampires within these monsters and references.

It seemed that I just was not looking hard enough and I had missed the vampires hidden back in some of the booths. But instead of the classic Bela Lugosi *Dracula* (1931), who only appeared in a small number of them, the vampires of the Hammer Studio films of England in the 1950s-1970s were abundant as were vampires of a number of B movies that I had never heard of before. In fact, several of the DVD vendors had the Hammer films, especially the vampire films, in their own section. *The Lost Boys* (1987) was also noticeably absent from the scene. There was only one reference that I saw to the original *Fright Night* (1985) in the form of a lampshade atop a vampire skull lamp. There were also some cartoony vampire plush and a few pieces of *Dark Shadows* (both 1966 and 2012) jewelry.

I took a break from the vendor floor to attend Hal Mile's panel on his work in special effects. He spoke mainly of his work with James Cameron on *Terminator 2* (1991) and of his work on *Gremlins 2*. I took particular interest in the conversation about working with the director to create a character. Here, he spoke of the compromise and conflicts of character design. In one instance, he and Cameron had been at odds over a character when Miles felt very strongly about the direction of the piece and Cameron wanted something very different. After a bit of tension and raised voices, Cameron stopped and told Miles that he could tell he had a lot of passion for the work and that he could create something that would fit with the overall vision of the film. They then were able to work out a compromise and complete a cohesive final product. Miles noted that even though sometimes directors may seem unwieldy, as long as you are passionate and willing to work with them, the artist can indeed have a say in the final product.

At the end of the day after the panel, I stopped by one of the DVD vendors to get a closer look at some of the vampire and horror films. There, I got into a conversation with Brian, who regularly attended Spooky Empire's conventions, as well as Juan, the vendor who was selling the DVDs. We were later joined by a woman who worked as a tour guide for Universal Studios. While I did not learn much about the ideas of horror from them, they gave me much insight into the idea of Spooky Empire itself. While I had gotten the impression that this was a larger horror convention from the website, it really was a smaller, more personal convention. In fact, like Michael, the photographer at the zombie walk, they all stressed the idea that many of these people had become like family to them. I left the convention center that night thinking about how different this experience had been from other conventions that I had attended.

Saturday was to be the day with the most events and attendance, and I arrived at 10:30 a.m. for another look around the floor. The area did not officially open until 11 a.m. but the VIP pass allowed an hour early access to the space. General admission ticketholders were lined up outside of the main doors, and within the foyer there was a line for those wishing to buy a ticket just for the day. Unfortunately, I found that many of the guests and vendors had not arrived or were just beginning the process of resetting their tables and booths for the day. The vendor room floor was relatively quiet, with VIPs, convention staff and volunteers, and vendors hovering around the coffee vendor offering free samples of two of their morning blends. I stood and examined the different blends and names that Coffee Shop of Horrors had to offer, and found a number of film, television, and general horrific references, with blends such as *The Re-Animator*, *Burial Grounds*, and *Siren Song*. Otherwise, the rest of the floor was empty aside from convention staff and a few VIPs who had come early to see what bargains were to be had. I

returned to my hotel room and reentered the convention around 11:30. Things had picked up considerably within the hour.



Figure 17: A number of the horrific blends available from Coffee Shop of Horrors

The space was now filled with individuals dressed as movie characters and creatures such as Beetlejuice, Freddy Krueger, Jack and Sally Skellington, Space Ghost, Pinhead from *Hellraiser* (1987), zombies, werewolves, and even some superheroes. Other individuals wore t-shirts with various horror references. *Godzilla*, *Jaws*, *Friday the 13th*, and Alice Cooper band shirts were the most common. A few were wearing the traditional Alice Cooper makeup and elements of his costumes, such as a bloodied collar shirt and top hat or red and black striped pants. The vendor hall was packed with all of these characters, and it was actually a bit difficult to maneuver down some of the aisles because of the crowd and people taking pictures of the costumes and, in some cases, the merchandise.

I next decided to check out the autograph area and talk to two effects artists, Hal Miles and Barry Anderson. According to his filmography, Hal Miles had worked on *From Dusk Til Dawn* (1996), and I had hoped to ask him a few questions about his work on that and to potentially schedule an interview to discuss it further. His table was very busy at the time, and as I walked up, the group in front of Barry Anderson's table was walking away. I took their place in

front of the table and we exchanged greetings. He noticed my "I love to make monsters" t-shirt that I purchased from Sandy Collora at Mask-Fest and asked me about my interest in effects. I told him about my research and that I was trying to learn a bit of the trade as well. He took an immediate interest in my project but told me that he really did not do what I was looking for in vampires. However, he was more interested in talking about anthropology and archaeology as well as inquiring about my makeup projects and sharing related stories of his experience with similar materials or issues. After about a half an hour, we exchanged contact cards and I walked over to talk to Hal Miles.

After I walked up to Miles' table, I began to examine a number of casts, prosthetics, and animatronics in front of him while he finished a conversation with some other attendees. As they walked away, we spoke, and he immediately asked about my shirt and my interest in effects. Like with Anderson, I told him about my research and my personal projects. He was intrigued, especially once he found out that I was at Ball State, as he had grown up in Indiana. But when I asked about his involvement on *From Dusk Til Dawn*, he confided that he had only worked with the film for three days building and running an animatronic head. He mentioned that the film was definitely one that I needed to look into if I had not already, and he seemed happy that I had gotten the chance to speak with Robert Kurtzman about the effects in the movie. I was also told about a touring animation exhibit that he had created, which highlighted years of animation history and memorabilia from his collection as well as from that of Ray Harryhausen. As with Anderson, Miles and I exchanged contact cards, and I was told that I could contact him anytime for effects advice.

At 6 p.m. that night, I attended the Alice Cooper panel in the Citrus Ballroom. I arrived early because I knew it would likely be crowded based on the attire I saw earlier in the day, but I

had no idea the extent of it. At 5:40, there were already three full lines of general admission ticketholders, and convention staff had begun telling VIPs to go ahead and enter the Bin Furuya (the creature suit actor for Ultraman and Gidorah) panel which was in progress to secure a seat. I made it into the second row, and asked the group in front of me if they were saving one of the empty seats. They said they were, but as the Alice Cooper panel was about to begin, one who later introduced himself as Falcon turned to me and told me to jump up front because their friend was now not coming. In terms of horror, the panel actually provided a surprising insight into masked characters such as Jason Voorhees. Cooper had written a song, *Man Behind the Mask*, about this character, and confided that he believed that one thing that made *Friday the 13th* so scary was the killer's lack of emotion. The hockey mask did not allow the character to show any sort of anger, remorse, fear, or other emotion, and somehow that made the villain much more frightening. I had never considered this before, as most of the modern vampire films I had studied focus on the correlation between anger and the expression and depiction of monstrosity.

Not long after this, I made my way to the VIP after-party in the Key Ballroom. Before entering the space, I was met by convention staff where I was to show my ID and VIP pass before I was granted admission. The space was dim, but not overly loud or crowded. To my right, I saw a number of people crowded around a photo background, and in front of me I saw a line of people waiting around a table in the back. I made my way to the back and saw this was the table for raffle items. I found my tickets from my packet and dropped them into the containers. From there, I made my way to the center of the room where I spotted the cake, an elaborate creation of Godzilla and Gidorah destroying the area around our convention center and hotel. Standing in front of the cake was the creature suit actor for Gidorah and Ultraman, Bin Furuya, taking pictures with some of the VIPs.



Figure 18: The author and Bin Furuya of *Ultraman* at the VIP after-party.

I stood watching the scene when a man in a suit jacket and jeans spoke to me and asked if I wanted him to take my picture with Furuya as the others were doing. He introduced himself as Eric. We then began to talk before spotting a crowd of people that ended up being some of the cast members of *Day of the Dead* (1985). Both of us got pictures with them, and he told me to come with him to meet his friends. Oddly enough, once we reached the table they were standing around, one of the girls in the party looks at me and says "Hey, you're the girl that sat with us at the Alice Cooper panel!" It turned out that they were the ones who had offered me the empty seat beside them when their friend did not show up. Their group consisted of a number of people, including Eric, Falcon, Rosette, and Sarah. Soon one thought she spotted Anthony Michael Hall, so the group began to wander to the center of the room. On the way Michael, the photographer from the zombie walk, stopped me to talk.



Figure 19: *Day of the Dead* group (from left to right) Lori Cardille, Gary Klar, the author, and Terry Alexander at the VIP after-party

As we chatted, Michael began telling me about the cake and how a local couple have made these elaborate creations for the VIP party for the last few years. We talked a bit about the current location of the convention and where it was moving to in October. Again, he stressed the idea that Spooky Empire was like a big family and that he hoped I could come to the next show in October. Mid-conversation, he stopped and asked if I had gotten a chance to meet Mike Christopher who had led the zombie walk the day before. I said no and Michael led me across the floor to meet him. Mike Christopher greeted me by taking my hand and comically pretending to bite it as a zombie would and we began talking about the convention and the zombie walk. He told me that years ago, Spooky Empire had been known as *ScreamFest*, and that others from *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) had attended to lead the same sort of zombie walks that he led the previous day. We finished our conversation as an announcement was made, and before walking away, he stopped and said "Welcome to the Spooky Empire family" before giving me a full hug.

Michael then went off to take photographs of the cake, and after it was distributed I rejoined Eric, Falcon, and the others. They asked me the same series of questions I had gotten most of the weekend: had I been to another Spooky Empire before; what other conventions had I been to; was I there on my own; was I local to Florida. Their queries were almost a direct echo

of others I had encountered at various points of the convention. I told them I had come from Indiana. The next question that followed was the same that had come from others - why had I come all the way down here for Spooky. I told them that I was there doing research for my thesis and explained a bit about what I was doing. The conversation switched gears as the DJ announced that the raffles were starting soon, and we began to imagine what prizes we might win and how many others had entered for their chance at the same prizes. Before long, the raffle had been drawn, the party had ended, a few of us exchanged contact information, and we went our separate ways--some to the poolside area to finish out the general ticketholder's party, others to their rooms for a quieter atmosphere and/or a few drinks with friends.

Sunday, the final day of the convention, was a bit slower than the previous two days. I entered the convention center about 11:15 that morning and the floor was relatively empty. Once again though, a number of attendees were huddled around the coffee vendor, and a few other attendees were slowly walking around wearily examining the merchandise. It seemed that many had not yet recovered from Saturday night's festivities, as I saw fewer familiar faces around. Some vendors were even starting to discount items so they would not have to pack everything up at the end of the day. As more people filed in a bit closer to noon, the atmosphere had changed considerably. There was a feeling of sadness in the place, even while attendees bounced around from area to area. The weekend was drawing to a close, and it would be six months before anyone would gather together for another Spooky Empire.

Within the hour, there were quite a few more people scattered around the foyer. Many of them were in costume in preparation for the costume contest later that day. Here, in the foyer, those in costume were frequently stopped for photographs, which was much easier to accomplish there than in the more crowded vendor room. Making my way back into the vendor room, I saw

that more of the familiar faces had returned. I sought out a number of them to say my goodbyes, as I would be leaving the convention a bit early to go to Universal Studios to see their makeup museum display and their Horror Makeup Show. I found some of them right away, and ended up talking to Brian quite a bit before it was time for me to leave. While we talked, he noticed my Barnabas Collins *Dark Shadows* necklace I had purchased the day before. He began to recount his experience with the series, and talk about some of the effects in the show. The conversation then moved on to other vampire shows, and he began to speak of the vampires in *True Blood* (2008-2014) and their cultural affiliations. This was a series I had not yet watched, so I mentally added it to my list to watch later. As he talked, I could not help but think that if the audience was picking up on the notions of folklore, culture, and mythology in these characters, it also seemed to be utilized by the artists and designers themselves.

Soon, it was time for me to leave the convention center. Before I left, many hugs and sad smiles were exchanged on my route to the exit. I was fortunate to pass by Michael, who also gave me a hug in case we did not see each other again before I left. I asked if there were any other events at Gatorville or anywhere that evening, or if the convention would be officially over. He told me that there usually was a game of *Cards Against Humanity* by the pool and to swing by when I got back from the park.

At Universal Studios, I was able to visit the Horror Makeup Show, which featured a small makeup museum, which chronicled a sampling of the history of Universal's monsters and character makeups from the 1930s to the early 2000s. Displays devoted to the likes of Jack Pierce, Bud Westmore, and Rob Bottin showed a number of makeup pieces, molds, photographs, and animatronic rigs from films and television series such as *Frankenstein* (1931), *Creature from the Black Lagoon*, *The Munsters* (1964-1966), and *The Thing*. While I was familiar with a

number of these films, artists, and makeups, the displays provided interesting photos and behind the scenes information.

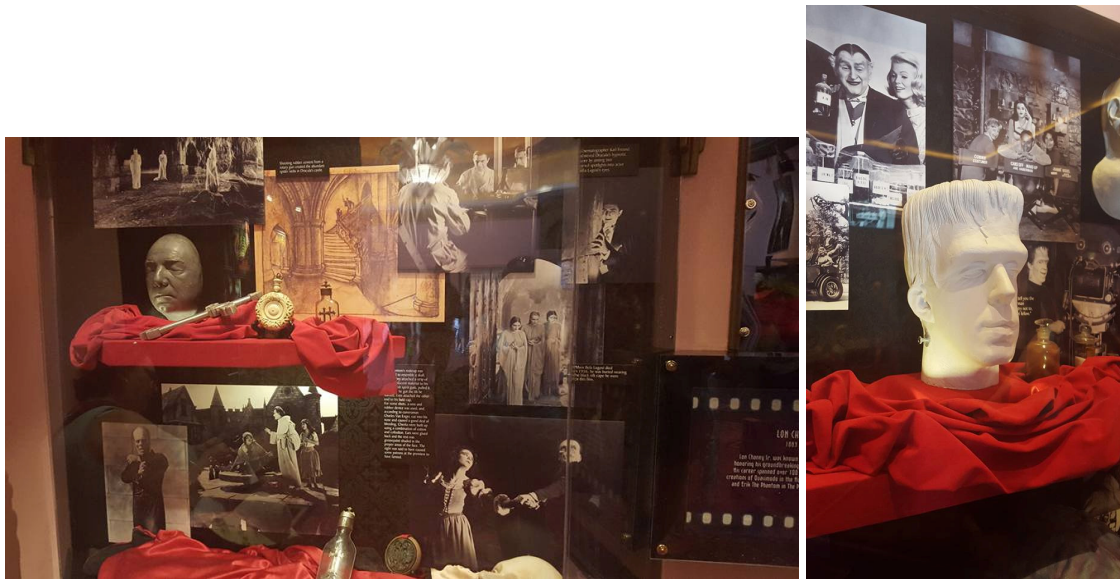


Figure 20 (left): Classic Universal monsters display at the Horror Makeup Show

Figure 21 (right): Casting of Fred Gwynne's Herman Munster makeup from *the Munsters*

They opened the doors to the auditorium and the Horror Makeup Show was about to begin. It provided a basic overview of the history of effects makeup, from Jack Pierce to the invention of foam latex prosthetics, as well as animatronic rigs used by Rick Baker in *An American Werewolf in London* for the transformation scenes. Otherwise, the show largely featured audience interaction and a look at how some of the more bloody effects were created for the screen. A telemetry vest to control large animatronics was also used in the display. While it was a nice refresher and a reminder of how far I had come in my studies, I was a bit disappointed that the show was not more detailed. However, it was wonderful to see some of the original molds, props, animatronics, and casts from some of the iconic horror films of the time.



Figure 22: Interior of the Horror Makeup Show, with references to classic film and television

Upon my return, I went straight to where I had hoped to find Michael and the rest playing cards. Instead, I found the pool eerily quiet, with only two of Gatorville's tables occupied by convention staff or lingering guests. The atmosphere had changed considerably from one of excitement and camaraderie to one of an almost unnerving silence. By the time I reached my room, I had an email from Michael that said the people who usually bring the game did not come this year, and he wished me well on my travels. With a sense of sadness, I began to pack my suitcase for my flight the next day, fully understanding what everyone had told me about these people becoming like family.

Looking back on the weekend, I did not find what I had expected, but the results were very useful. I had been completely wrong in my understanding of popular retro horror characters, and I realized that by narrowly focusing on vampires within a certain time period, I was missing quite a lot regarding the basis for some of these modern ideas. Although it was my last research opportunity at this time, Spooky Empire Retro provided a better understanding of

my research issues, and I am thankful to have been given such an opportunity to experience these notions of horror and to be welcomed in as a member of the Spooky Empire family.

Interviews

The next section of research focuses on interviews I had with five makeup artists, creature and character designers, and sculptors. For this, I was fortunate to speak with Sandy Collora, Robert Kurtzman, Michèle Burke, Scott Fensterer, and Jennifer Dean. These individuals were asked a series of questions regarding design, mythology and folklore, inspiration, and classic horror films. While a number of them offered different perspectives on their process and approach to a character, the overall tone of their responses were often quite similar.

Sandy Collora is a creature designer and special effects makeup artist who began his career with Stan Winston Studios. He has worked with industry professionals such as Rob Bottin and Rick Baker, developed toys and resin kits, and is now directing and producing independent films such as *Batman: Dead End* and *Hunter Prey*. His current project, *Shallow Water*, is scheduled for release as a short film in a larger horror and science fiction anthology given successful crowdfunding efforts. He also has released a series of books entitled *The Art of Creature and Character Design*, which feature insight on design and process using interviews collected from a number of artists in the industry.

Collora is a proponent of the use of practical makeup effects, especially in horror films. He believes that the overuse of CGI has been detrimental to the real organic feel that should be present in horror characters. With the use of CGI, studios are able to create fantastic creatures with a smaller budget. These beings do not have to be rooted in reality or follow the rules of physics in the same way as a creature made with practical effects. Collora also notes that

Hollywood no longer encourages and embraces the development of original creatures and characters. There has been little of note since the 1980s with creatures such as Giger's *Alien* (1979), unfortunately studios today want familiarity and are afraid to take a chance on losing money from sponsoring something original. This is where independent filmmakers are able to make their mark on the industry.

In terms of designing horrific characters, Collora designs creatures to fit specific roles or purposes in film. Translating a design or attribute across cultures should not be an issue, he believes as long as a character is able to invoke a sense of dread and be unsettling to the audience. It is difficult to pin this down to one or two characteristics, but he summed things up with the phrase "Scary is scary."

This idea of an original iconic creature may be seen in several of Collora's own independent film projects, including *Shallow Water*. Drawing inspiration from aquatic life and other iconic forms, the film's creature, the Tiburonera (see Figure 23), is intended to step away from the familiar stylistic forms and CGI characters found in much of Hollywood. Unlike many of the speakers in Mask-Fest's Indie Filmmaker panel, however, Collora says that the film "will carry a heavy message" about the dangers of abusing the environment. While *Shallow Water* will be a gritty horror film, it also comes with a social commentary on ocean conservation--a cause very dear to him.



Figure 23: *Shallow Water's* Tiburonera, designed by Sandy Collora (Kickstarter 2015).

Robert Kurtzman, co-founder of KNB EFX Group, Inc., was kind enough to take time away from his table at Mask-Fest to speak about his experiences with films such as *From Dusk Til Dawn*, *Vampire in Brooklyn*, and John Carpenter's *Vampires*. Kurtzman is co-founder of KNB EFX Group, Inc. with Howard Berger and Greg Nicotero, and their company has received a number of awards and nominations for their work on films and television series. They also share a Saturn Award (1999) for Best Make-Up for *Vampires*. In 2003, Kurtzman left KNB EFX Group, Inc. and founded his own company, Creature Corps, in Crestline, Ohio.

When discussing vampires and the designs from a number of films, Kurtzman first referenced the differences between the original vampire lore and how cinematic traditions have reinvented them. In the lore, *nosferatu* are impotent, yet modern cinema and Hollywood often make them sexy and desirable creatures. In spite of this, overall, the design of a vampire is usually dependent on the lore as found in the film or series. The design phase, for vampires, as is also the case for other creatures, begins with a series of sketches, sculptures, and maquettes, which are submitted for the director's and production team's approval. Occasionally, effects artists and directors may be one and the same, which can greatly expedite this process.

This was the case in the film *From Dusk Till Dawn* (FDTD), as Kurtzman was the original director and had a great deal of artistic freedom for KNB EFX Group, Inc in the initial phase of the project. Shortly after, Robert Rodriguez was brought on to the film as director, although Kurtzman and KNB EFX Group, Inc. were still allowed a great deal of creative liberty. *From Dusk Till Dawn* featured a wide variety of vampires and included ideas such as a snake cult, a vampire shapeshifting into a giant rat-like creature, vampires with more bat-like features, and vampires in mid-transformation (with forms somewhere between human and bat-like). The designs for this film combined many different ideas of vampire lore, which allowed the artists to keep the vampires fresh when compared to previous versions of these creatures.



Figure 24 (left): The snake vampire in FDTD (KNB EFX 2015)

Figure 25 (center): The vampire's rat transformation in FDTD (KNB EFX 2015)

Figure 26 (right): A group of vampires in the final stages of transformation in FDTD (KNB EFX 2015)

John Carpenter's *Vampires* (1998) was slightly more traditional in terms of vampire design. The biggest innovation in this film focused on the demise of the creatures, as KNB EFX Group, Inc., constructed a number of effects, which included explosions and smoke of varying colors as the vampires were pulled into the sunlight.



Figure 27: Valek and a number of vampires (IMDB 2016).

Vampire in Brooklyn (1995), however, utilized broader ideas of the vampire. Kurtzman and KNB EFX Group, Inc created bat-like features for Eddie Murphy for the film, and this was one of the first films to make use of these conventions. Here, the artists homed in on the connection of the vampire's anger to make him appear more monstrous, which contrasted with the majority of the film where Murphy's character was portrayed as relatively human. As the character became angrier, his features drifted further from human and became extremely bat-like, with a bat nose and pointed ears.



Figure 28: Eddie Murphy as Maximillian in full vampire form (KNB EFX 2015).

Yet another film Kurtzman discussed was an independent film *Children of the Night* (1991). In this film, the vampires thrived underwater and took refuge in a sort of silicone egg sac. With this film, Kurtzman emphasized how independent films can provide much more artistic freedom than in Hollywood, and the filmmakers were able to accomplish something completely different from previous vampire films to create their own lore.

Kurtzman also noted that there was a need to continually recreate characters like the vampire because it is easy for the designs to become stale. With films such as *From Dusk Till Dawn*, he and KNB EFX Group, Inc. were able to accomplish this task by combining different versions of the lore and working with Robert Rodriguez on particular visions. Otherwise, classic vampire films such as the original *Lost Boys* and *Fright Night* remain prime examples of inspiration for the now traditional aspects of the vampire.

I was also fortunate to speak with Michèle Burke, whose work on *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) and *Quest for Fire* (1981) earned her two Oscars for best makeup. She was also responsible for the makeup in *Interview with the Vampire* (1994). Burke spoke foremost about the general idea of a vampire, particularly that of the constant cycle of birth, life, and death the figure represents. She also noted that this cycle is symbiotic, as it is necessary to kill another organism in order to exist, whether life is eternal or not.

During Burke's work on *Interview with the Vampire*, the idea of eternal life was brought into conflict with this cycle, as the two main characters, Louis and LeStat became disillusioned with their existence as vampires. The director required that the makeups be very subtle and soft, so that the vampires could easily blend in with the crowd. Only the audience was to know that Louis, LeStat, and the others were immortal and bound to kill to survive. Burke noted that for vampires, the idea of eating flesh was common, but it is taboo in other societies and typically

meant death or suffering to those who practice it. *Interview with the Vampire* illustrates these consequences, as Louis, and even Lestat to a degree at the end, just wanted to end this cycle of killing and be like everyone else. In fact, this may even be the first film that deals with this issue, as other Hollywood adaptations romanticize vampirism and the idea of eternal life without giving a thought to the inherent problems of such a life.



Figure 29 (left): Lestat in *Interview with the Vampire* (IMDB 2016b)



Figure 30 (right): Louis in *Interview with the Vampire* (IMDB 2016c)

In contrast to the subtle makeup in *Interview with the Vampire*, Burke's makeup for *Bram Stoker's Dracula* was much more “over the top” and elaborate. Here, she spoke of the collaboration between the designer Eiko Ishioka, director Francis Ford Coppola, and herself that brought this character to life. Prior to the project's start, Coppola referenced a number of previous films such as *Nosferatu* (1929) and even *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1977) but decided against the use of a cloak and cape. The result was a clean slate and an East-meets-West design where Dracula in his youth could be Victorian and English, but portray more of an Eastern motif as an old man wearing Oriental robes. The design also blended Hopi Indian hairstyles with ideas from Kabuki theater to create an entirely new look for Dracula.



Figure 31 (left): Dracula as an old man (IMDB 2016d)



Figure 32 (right): Dracula in his youth (IMDB 2016e)

This collaboration is common in the film industry, as no one on a project works in a vacuum. Burke described the process as an orchestra, where an artist may want their particular effort to be the final selection or to be showcased, but in fact, the story, actor, sets, costumes, and all others involved must work together harmoniously to create a cohesive product. In the same way, she described the process as a tapestry, where the threads must weave together to create the result. While makeup is important to a film, it is necessary to work with others as a team. To illustrate the point, Burke cited her work on *Quest for Fire* and *Clan of the Cave Bear* (1986), where two similar characters (both Neanderthals) ended up with completely different designs because of the collaboration between the director and other departments involved. Burke noted that in *Quest for Fire*, the collaboration went very smoothly and this showed in the final design, but the *Clan of the Cave Bear* director had a very specific idea that the characters were to look more modern, and the resulting design was very watered down. These examples clearly illustrate the need for flexibility and collaboration when designing a makeup for a film, as it is not just the ideas of the makeup artist that appear on screen, but those of the entire mechanism involved in the production.

I next spoke with Scott Fensterer who provided insight on the ideas of contemporary vampires and how such characters can change over time. Fensterer owns a sculpture studio in the Orlando, Florida area, and is known for being a contestant on Season 9 of *Face Off*. He has also worked on a number of short films.

Fensterer began by talking about some of the historical bases of vampires and makeup in general by stating that how a character looks is a sign of the times and reflects what would be considered shocking to an audience. It also is a reflection of the makeup techniques of the era. Here, he cited that in the 1920s, *Nosferatu* was portrayed as more alien and very bat-like, while in the 1930s, vampires were human men and women with pale faces. In terms of the mythology, Fensterer noted that Vlad the Impaler was very human, but there was also the idea that a vampire could shapeshift into wolves and bats. However, the makeup techniques were too limited to be able to do such transitions well, and artists also had to contend with the vanity of actors who did not want their faces covered by makeup². It is also interesting to note the designs found in the vampires of *The Strain* (2014-present) and *30 Days of Night* (2007), which have driven vampires in a more contemporary direction. These ideas were also similar in zombie makeup, as the creatures began as guys in odd makeup and blood. With the innovations made by the makeup artists in *The Walking Dead*, the zombies have evolved to become more realistic and more cadaverous.

While these innovations and changes are the result of the times, so too are the types of creatures and characters that are the most prevalent in film and television. Vampires have been replaced by zombies, which are extremely popular at the present time. Hollywood does not step outside of what works. He noted that zombies will probably remain prevalent until audiences

² This was seen in the case of Bela Lugosi in the original Universal Pictures *Dracula*. Lugosi was originally slated to play Frankenstein's monster, but refused because he did not want his face obscured by the makeup prosthetics.

begin to get bored with them. However, even with this trend, Universal Studios is trying to reboot the classic monsters. While they tried this once before with Stephen Sommer's *The Mummy* (1999) and *Van Helsing*, the looks did not go over well in terms of what the audiences wanted. If anything, Fensterer believes that the vampires in the upcoming reboots will probably be closer to the traditional styles found in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*..

In terms of the social processes of Hollywood, Fensterer spoke of the collaborative nature of the work between artists and directors where the artists will give two or three concepts of a character to a director. The character is ultimately driven by the needs of the project or what the director wants. He illustrated this with the example of director and designer Patrick Tatopoulos, who had a very specific direction in mind when he revolutionized werewolves in the *Underworld* series(2003).

Another Florida area makeup artist, Jennifer Dean, spoke highly of the Universal monsters and their place in the history of special effects makeup. Dean has worked on a number of independent film projects and has had her work published in numerous magazines such as *Skinmarkz Magazine*, where one of her zombie makeups was recognized by Greg Nicotero of KNB EFX.



Figure 33: Vampire makeup with emphasis on brows and cheekbones (photo courtesy of Jennifer Dean)

When asked about the designs and forms found in vampire makeup, Dean mentioned that the creatures need to have an almost famished look, which can be achieved with the use of prosthetics to create sunken eye sockets and cheekbones. The high and pronounced cheekbones also serve to give the character a more grotesque and demonic presence. In contrast to a zombie, which is also a member of the undead, vampires must be kept "alive" by drinking the blood of an innocent. As a result, they do not have the rotted look that zombies are usually given, and their eyes are much more focused and alert. The idea here is to make the actor look as inhuman as possible to create a horrific look.

However, to Dean, a successful horror makeup does not always mean using a lot of blood. Instead, it is necessary to think about pop culture and what scares people. A believable character must have character consistency with flowing and seamless makeup. It also is critical to look to a character's mythology to stay true to what you are creating.

No matter how the characters have changed over time, Dean feels that the Universal classic monsters such as Frankenstein, the Bride of Frankenstein, The Mummy, and The Wolfman have driven audiences see movie monsters in a particular way. Individuals like Jack Pierce and Lon Chaney were key influences in this and changed the application processes and techniques for future artists. To understand today's horror makeup, it is critical to look back to these classics and the godfathers of horror makeup.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

Going into data collection, I would never have imagined some of the intricacies in the ideas that arose during my research. While I had a general idea of what I might find, more often than not, I was surprised by a number of elements in the design process or the forms found in horror characters. Each opportunity brought about a deeper understanding of the topic and allowed me to pinpoint specific directions for the next steps of the research process.

To reiterate from an earlier anecdote, prior to this research, I was not much of a fan of horror films and could not understand why certain films or characters were considered scary. The On-Skin Silicone class at Kosart Effects provided not only an understanding of the techniques and products used in makeup artistry but also gave me a basis for understanding the forms in horror makeup. Kosar stressed in this class the idea that even grotesque and inhuman characters must have recognizable anatomical forms to connect with the audience. I saw (or rather felt) this idea at work as Gibson airbrushed a sunken appearance onto my face at the Spooky Empire zombie walk, where he followed and outlined my features to change the forms. Whether it was for a vampire or a zombie, the idea was the same. There is, however, a difference in the styles used by certain artists and stylistic properties that need to be followed to obtain that character recognition. These notions, paired with the idea that it was indeed possible to use too much blood on a horror makeup, were critical to form an understanding of horrific characters in film and television.

That said, this project was full of contradictions. While you do not necessarily need a lot of blood to create something scary, images of blood, gore, and violent death are indeed an effective means of creating something horrific. The presence of severed limbs, brutal injuries, and rotting flesh at Midwest Haunter's Convention illustrated that an inherent fear of death,

dying, and mutilation was what made these sort of effects scary. The realism found in many of the pieces there made attendees face their own mortality, and I believe that this is a powerful notion in the overall understanding of what constitutes horror for an audience.

In addition to facing one's own mortality, the loss of control and the loss of humanity inherent in these creatures are also two driving forces to make something horrific. While some of the images at the Kosart Gallery's Maleficium exhibition showed these ideas of death and mutilation, a greater number focused on images of transformations, empty and blank eyes, and madness. The blank eyes and empty stares deny emotion, which Cooper emphasized as a key element in horror films such as *Friday the 13th*. The lack of remorse, empathy, or any other human emotion has the ability to make a character scary, as it seems to remove any and all social cues that might allow viewers to know what might be coming next. In this way, these masked characters remove all control from their victims who often become powerless to control their own fates. Pieces such as Hoffine's "Innsmouth" seemed to illustrate that many individuals feared losing control of their own free will and the loss of humanity when faced with the idea that these creatures were once human and have ability to make you become like them. This very idea translates directly to the vampire, who is able to transform an individual from a human to a creature of the night or make the victim lose all free will, i.e., serve the vampire as a familiar. Because the vampire used to be human, just as the viewer is, there is a real concern that the individual watching may also be powerless to stop the same fate from befalling them.

In terms of the design and form of the vampire itself, tradition, mythology and folklore were important elements to create a baseline for the makeup and tie the character into the particular storyline. However, in films such as *Bram Stoker's Dracula* or *From Dusk Til Dawn*, the original lore was altered to create a different look for their on-screen counterparts. In *Bram*

Stoker's Dracula, I found that the novel described the Count as a tall, old man with a long white moustache, bushy eyebrows, and thick hair against a lofty domed forehead. He also had a thin nose with a high bridge, arched nostrils, and a strong aquiline face. Stoker also described him as being clad in black from head to foot (Stoker 1897). While Burke and Coppola took these aspects into consideration, the final makeup created for Gary Oldman was very different due to the director wanting to take the character in a new and innovative direction.

In *From Dusk Til Dawn*, Kurtzman and the artists at KNB took certain elements from the mythology and combined them to create a number of new vampiric figures. Here, the idea of the stages of transformation from human to very monstrous were forefront. Because of a close working relationship with director Robert Rodriguez, and the fact that Kurtzman had started the project as the original director, the makeup artists were able to push the limits and create their own ideas of vampire lore for the film. However, this appears to have been an unusual case, as oftentimes compromises must be made to include elements that suit the director, the actor and artist that fit the tone of the film or series. Sometimes particular elements must be lobbied for, and the artist's passion to create something to fit the film can often influence the final design of a character, just as Miles described. Other times, as in the *Clan of the Cave Bear*, the director's comments take precedence and the look of a character completely changes.

As much as the social hierarchy and working relationships within the entertainment industry shape how a horrific character is to look, the social and cultural understandings of the audiences also play a major role in the design process. A horror character must be shocking to an audience, which is why the forms of the 1930s, 1950s, 1980s, 1990s, and contemporary monsters often appear so differently. In the 1930s, artists were able to set a baseline (for the future) using the materials and techniques available to them. As time progressed and audiences

became used to the sight of these creatures, newer ideas had to be created to continue to shock (and bring in) viewers. Every few decades, the look of creatures such as the vampire shifted from being very human to more inhuman beings and even into animals like bats and wolves. The same holds true for zombies, which have changed from humans in bluish-white makeup to hyper-realistic cadavers. Once the audience begins to tire of the current designs (and revenue falls off), Hollywood will then move in a different direction, either by requiring innovative changes to the makeup or by offering viewers a new take on a traditional sort of monster or some combination together.

While these forms and conventions may change over time, there is also an idea of continuity at work here, too, as new-age horror films will often pay homage to the classics through using variants of their forms and designs or through the use of scripted dialogue or actions. I believe this is due in part to the large number of fans who have seen and even revere these older films and series. As I learned at Spooky Empire Retro, the classic monsters of the 1930s, the Hammer films of the 1950s to the 1970s, and horror movies of the 1980s through the early 2000s hold a special place for fans of the genre. Whether this is because the individuals discovered the genre through these films, or because these films and special effects paved the way for modern new-age horror effects, or both, is difficult to say. Still, the historical basis of films such as *Alien*, *Predator* (1987), *Dracula*, *Frankenstein*, and others may be seen in many later new-age horror adaptations. Whether it be the *Blade* (1998) trilogy, which seems to harken back to *Predator* in terms of design, or *The Strain*, which appears to be a subtle nod to Giger's *Alien*, vampires and other new-age horror characters have managed to be innovative, yet stay true to their roots.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

Overall, contemporary social and cultural elements often appear to be the driving force behind vampire and horror makeups, with mythology and folklore following as a close second. Powdermaker's (1950) original analysis of the social hierarchies just scratched the surface, as there are a number of intricacies within this system. Artists, directors, costumers, and other designers all must work in conjunction with one another to create a cohesive final product given the means and materials available to them. However, the characters created for the screen are not made in a vacuum, as the audience is also taken into consideration. What will shock the audience? How has this changed from the forms and designs that have been utilized in the past? Will (or should) there be any continuity between the new-age horror characters and their predecessors? As times change, so too do the characters and forms.

However, the underlying notions and motivations for the fears linked to horror and horrific characters appear to have remained constant over time. An inherent fear of death, decay, dying, and mutilation as well as the loss of self make the use of blood, gore, and hyper-realistic injuries plausible in horror films. In the same way, artists and designers make use of transformative makeups and work for their audiences due to the fears associated with the loss of humanity and the loss of control and free will. The latter ideas in particular can be found most explicitly the idea of the vampire, which has the power to remove humanity and free will from its victim.

For a character like the vampire, the mythology and folklore from which they have emerged should also be given some thought. These traditional sources (and images) help create a strong basis (and understanding) for what a particular character is supposed to be and aids in making him/her recognizable to an audience. That said, even if the artist or director chooses to

follow the mythology and folklore more or less exactly, the character still has to fit within the overall story and make sense there. Often, this leads to artists, designers, and directors selecting bits and pieces of the original folklore and mythology about a creature and building a character this way when this makes the most sense given the setting and storyline.

Overall, the creation of horrific characters is the result of a complicated network of social processes, cultural and historical ideas, available materials, resources and technology, and traditional mythology and folklore. As ideas change with the times, so do the designs of these monsters. In order to prey on an audience's inherent fears of death, mutilation, and the loss of self and self-control, artists must continually attempt to shock viewers with designs and concepts, that seemingly have not been used in the past.

Going into this project, I knew that there was much more to a horror character than what just watching a movie or television series could tell me. However it was not until I began to see these ideas represented off screen and I had started to speak with the artists about the creations did I realize just how many social and cultural processes played into creating a cohesive makeup. While all artists acknowledged the importance of knowing the basis of the character in terms of its folkloric antecedents, overall, these designs were driven primarily by the design team's artistic intuition(s) and their understanding of the audience for which these creatures were created.

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APPENDIX A
List of Films and Series Watched and/or Revisited

Vampire Films and Series

30 Days of Night (2007)
Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter (2014)
Angel (1999-2004)
Blade: Trinity (2004)
Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997-2003)
Children of the Night (1991)
Dark Shadows (1966-1971)
Dark Shadows (2012)
Dracula (1931)
Dracula (1992)
Dracula: Dead and Loving It (1995)
Fright Night (1985)
Fright Night (2011)
From Dusk Til Dawn (1996)
Interview with the Vampire (1994)
Priest (2011)
Son of Dracula (1943)
The Lost Boys (1987)
The Strain (2014-present)
Vampire in Brooklyn (1995)
Vampires (1998)
Van Helsing (2004)

Other Films

Alien (1979)
Batman: Dead End (2003)
Creepshow (1982)
Day of the Dead (1985)
Fido (2006)
Hellraiser (1987)
Hunter Prey (2010)
Nightmare on Elm Street (1984)
Re-Animator (1985)
Tales from the Darkside: The Movie (1990)
The Cell (2000)
The Rage (2007)
The Thing (1982)
Tusk (2014)
Quest for Fire (1981)

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

- When creating a concept for a character, how important is the need for a design to translate across a wide, potentially cross-cultural audience?
- What makes a mythological or fantasy character recognizable to an audience?
- In terms of horror, what makes a believable character? Also does it generally seem more important for these characters to evoke sympathy or fear in their viewers?
- How do you translate this believability to a classic monster like the vampire?
- Do you feel that the characters and creatures of Hollywood today are more likely to be based off of a previous incarnation of the creature or (if available) the original mythologies and stories of the characters or creatures?
- What seem to be the most influential vampires films in terms of character design, and (if the films are more modern) have these changed the idea of the vampire since the original Nosferatu or Dracula films?
- In general, do you see a trend of sticking with more classic creature designs as opposed to making subtle or innovative changes to give viewers something new?
- What is your experience with vampire and horror characters?
- How influential do you see Lost Boys as being on contemporary vampire makeups?
- So do you see a trend in makeup designs working for a few decades then being replaced or is there another factor at work here?
- What drives makeup designs? How much of a collaborative effort goes in and how much of the artists designs show through in the end?
- Do you see vampires as coming back into the media or is it still primarily zombie oriented for a while?
- What are some of the key designs and forms for vampire makeup?
- What elements come to mind when you think of a horror makeup? How do you make something seem scary to a general audience and still be a believable character?
- How different is designing a vampire makeup compared to something like a zombie? Do you use a similar process when thinking about forms or are they completely different?

- From where do you draw inspiration for your makeup designs? Does this change when working on personal projects compared to working on films or more specific projects?
- Do you ever consider a creature's/character's mythology or folklore when you are designing a makeup?
- What do you feel are some of the most influential monster movies that have driven horror makeup to where it is today?
- What was the inspiration for the variety of vampires in From Dusk Til Dawn? Did KNBEFX have a lot of control over the designs?
- When you design a vampire, are there any traditional elements that you follow and try to incorporate consistently, or does it vary from project to project?
- What is your process for designing the vampire makeup in the film? (i.e. did you draw from any of the book, other films, etc). How much of the final look came from collaboration with other members of the production team?
- What is the benefit of using a more subtle, human looking makeup for a vampire as opposed to something more transformed or grotesque?